

**BOOK REVIEW**

**THE COLEOPTERA OF THE GALAPAGOS ISLANDS**, by Edwin C. Van Dyke. Cal. Acad. Sci., XXII, 1953, 181 pp. 7 plates figuring 55 species.

This posthumous publication by the beloved coleopterist of the California Academy of Sciences is a list of the 200 species and subspecies of beetles taken in the Galapagos Islands since Charles Darwin began to collect in the region in 1835. Of the 167 endemic forms known from the archipelago, 23 were named by George R. Waterhouse in 1845 in the initial report on Darwin's collection; 22 were named in 1928 and 1933 by K. G. Blair; and 80 are described as new by Van Dyke in the present paper. Van Dyke suspects that many additional species remain to be discovered in the islands. The 200 forms listed represent 37 families, but about three-fifths of them belong to five families: Tenebrionidae (46), Carabidae (24), Curculionidae (20), Cerambycidae (18), Elateridae (14). Of the 200 forms cited, 167 (83%) are endemic, 3 are probably recorded from the archipelago in error, and 30 (15%) occur elsewhere. Almost the only truly cosmopolitan species recorded are *Necrobia rufipes* DeG., *Dermestes carnivorus* F., *D. maculatus* DeG., and *Gnathocerus cornutus* F., and the influence of man on the fauna must so far be relatively slight.

Dr. Van Dyke believes that the modifications exhibited by Galapagos beetles is not the result of "haphazard distribution" but of a "gradual isolation . . . such as could be produced by the breaking up of large islands into smaller ones. . . . It would appear as if a . . . portion of western South America was isolated by the subsidence of the intervening area. . . . This land mass was later broken up into small islands." The islands then are "continental" and not "oceanic" as considered by Alfred Russel Wallace.

The reviewer queries whether the orderly distribution noted by Dr. Van Dyke may not be possible over ocean stretches as well as over continuous land areas. Moreover, are not the 200 species of Coleoptera known from the Galapagos Islands an improbably small number if the islands are viewed as fragments of a former continent?

MELVILLE H. HATCH, *University of Washington.*